

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PK

SUBJ: BALUCHISTAN: NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY REACTION TO PRIME
MINISTER'S INITIATIVE

SUMMARY: NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) HAS DISMISSED BHUTTO'S
APRIL 14 ANNOUNCEMENT OF PARTIAL AMNESTY AND WITHDRAWAL
OF ARMY FROM LAW AND ORDER OPERATIONS IN BALUCHISTAN AS
PROPAGANDA STUNT. NAP REITERATED LONG-STANDING POSITION
THAT ALL POLITICAL DETAINEES MUST BE RELEASED, PARTI-
CULARLY BALUCH LEADERS, AND THAT ARMY SHOULD RETURN TO
NORMAL PEACETIME DEPLOYMENTS IN BALUCHISTAN. BHUTTO'S
CONCESSIONS TO NAP, HOWEVER SMALL, COULD OPEN UP NEW
PERIOD OF MANEUVERING ON BALUCHISTAN POLITICAL PROBLEM.
END SUMMARY

1. NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE
AT CONSLUSION OF THREE-DAY MEETING APRIL 15 STRONGLY
DENOUNCED PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT OF PREVIOUS DAY ON
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BALUCHISTAN AS PROPAGANDA. COMMITTEE, MEETING IN ABSENCE

OF PARTY PRESIDENT WALI KHAN (WHO HAS BEEN IN LONDON FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT SINCE MID-JANUARY) EMPHASIZED LIMITED NATURE OF BHUTTO'S TWO PROPOSALS: (1) THAT LAW AND ORDER RESPONSIBILITY IN BALUCHISTAN WILL REVERT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES AFTER MAY 15 WITH ARMY UNDERTAKING ONLY CIVIL ACTION PROGRAMS, AND (2) THAT AMNESTY WILL BE GRANTED TO THOSE DETAINED IN PROVINCE NOT IMPLICATED IN SERIOUS CRIMES.

2. ON FIRST PROPOSAL, NAP SAID CIVIL AUTHORITIES FULLY COMPETENT TO UNDERTAKE ROAD BUILDING, ETC., AND ARMY SHOULD THEREFORE BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN. ON AMNESTY, NAP CLAIMED FIVE THOUSAND BALUCH ARRESTED FOR POLITICAL REASONS WITH MANY, INCLUDING LEADERS MENGAL, MARRI AND BIZENJO, UNDER DETENTION OUTSIDE BALUCHISTAN. OTHERS HAVE FLED TO AFGHANISTAN. BOTH CATEGORIES WOULD NOT BENEFIT FROM AMNESTY OFFER. NAP GROUP ALSO POINTED OUT THAT GOP IN APRIL 14 ANNOUNCEMENT HAD ADMITTED WHAT IT HAD PREVIOUSLY DENIED BY ACKNOWLEDGING ARMY ACTION AGAINST BALUCH POLITICAL OPPOSITION. NAP ALSO ATTACKED GOP ASSERTION THAT ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN BALUCHISTAN REPRESENTED GOP EFFORT TO END FEUDAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM PREVAILING IN THAT PROVINCE; NAP ALLEGED THAT ONLY LITTLE

OVER HUNDRED TRIBAL CHIEFS OR LEADERS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH NAP WHILE REMAINDER SUPPORTED RULING PPPM

3. WHILE PLEDGING CONTINUATION OF "STRUGGLE AGAINST DICTATORSHIP", NAP LEFT OPENING TO GOP BY STATING THAT NAP DID NOT INSIST ON RESTORATION OF NAP GOVERNMENT IN BALUCHISTAN, BUT WAS PREPARED TO SIT IN OPPOSITION. PARTY ALSO CONDEMNED MIDDLE EASTERN (READ IRAN) COUNTRIES FOR "MISGUIDING" GOP ON BALUCHISTAN.

4. COMMENT: BHUTTO'S INITIATIVE FALLS FAR SHORT OF WHAT NAP BALUCH LEADERS HAVE LONG DEMANDED: COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY FROM ALL TRIBAL AREAS AND RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, PARTICULARLY MENGAL, MARRI AND BIZENJO. NAP NORTHWEST FRONTIER LEADERS, INCLUDING WALI KHAN, HAVE CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED THEIR BALUCH PARTY MEMBERS ON THESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TWO ISSUES, AND ALTHOUGH WALI WAS ABSENT FROM ISLAMABAD COMMITTEE MEETINGS HE HAS LITTLE OPTION BUT TO ENDORSE HARD-LINE REACTION ADOPTED. NONTHELESS, WE AGREE WITH CONGEN KARACHI COMMENT THAT "GOOD DEAL OF BACKSTAGE MANEUVERING" CAN BE EXPECTED BETWEEN NOW AND MAY 15 FROM GOP AND NAP. BHUTTO GAVE UP LITTLE IN APRIL 14 ANNOUNCEMENT, BUT HE DID TAKE FIRST STEP TO EASE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PRESSURE AGAINST BALUCH NAP SINCE ITS PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

WAS DISMISSED FEBRUARY 1973. HE WILL NOW PRESUMABLY ATTEMPT TO INDUCE BALUCH NAP LEADERS TO LOWER THEIR TERMS. RELEASE OF THE THREE BALUCH FIGURES MENTIONED ABOVE IS, IN OUR VIEW, PREREQUISITE TO ANY MEANINGFUL POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF CONTINUING CONFLICT IN PROVINCE.

5. ASIDE FROM BALUCH PROBLEM PER SE, BHUTTO MAY HAVE HAD AT LEAST TWO OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND IN REACHING DECISION TO LIMIT REPRESSIVE TACTICS IN BALUCHISTAN. GROUP OF NON-NAP PUNJABI OPPOSITION POLITICIANS HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN BALUCHISTAN PROBLEM IN PUNJAB, AND APRIL 14 INITIATIVE MAY SERVE TO UNDERCUT THEIR EFFORTS. ALSO, WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY FROM ANY BUT CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS PRESUMABLY WILL APPEASE ANY CRITICS OF GOP BALUCHISTAN POLICY WITHIN ARMED FORCES.

6. COPY OF TEXT OF NAP RESOLUTION POUCHED NEA/PAB, KABUL, KARACHI AND LAHORE.
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